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ABSTRACT

Values education has recently been high on the political agenda in many countries, including the Netherlands. Using a theoretical framework based on traditions in several academic areas, this study examined attitudes of Dutch parents, teachers, and secondary school students regarding moral education goals and the division of moral tasks between parents and teachers. Using the Delphi Method, data were collected by means of questionnaires, group interviews, and panel discussions. Completing the mail questionnaire were 571 adolescents, ages 14 to 17 years, 180 parents, and 86 teachers from 8 secondary schools. Group interviews took place at participant schools with panel discussions conducted at three selected schools. A factor analysis of questionnaire responses revealed four factors explaining 43 percent of the variance: strategic action in the moral domain, social sensitivity, conformity, and emotional development. Questionnaire findings indicated that all groups attached great importance to moral development, with conformity considered slightly less important than other areas. Among students, girls viewed strategic action, social sensitivity, and emotional development as being more important than did boys. Vocational education students/parents viewed conformity as more important than did general secondary education students/parents. Parents' religious background and education were related to views of conformity. Students of non-Dutch origin viewed conformity as more important than students of Dutch origin. Group interviews indicated that students emphasized formulating their own opinion, parents emphasized the relationship between strategic action and conformity, and teachers emphasized an openness to criticism. All groups indicated that they would like greater attention paid to moral development goals at school. (Contains 46 references.) (KB)

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ED 435 490

MORAL DEVELOPMENT AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL:

DIVISION OF MORAL TASKS BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Which goals regarding moral education do parents, teachers and students consider important? Which tasks should go to the parents, and which to the school? Are there differences within the category of parents which can be attributed to their social class (Kohn, 1969) or to religion? How do teachers, parents and students argue the various ways of dividing moral development between parents and secondary education? The study modelled on the Delphi Method (Turoff, 1975) consisted of three phases: a survey by questionnaire, group interviews and panel discussions. The quantitative data obtained by questionnaire were supplemented by qualitative data from the group interviews and the panel discussions. In this article we will focus specifically on the importance attached by parents, teachers and students to the various goals of moral education and on the division of tasks between parents and school. The article starts with an explanation of the theoretical framework of the research, the instruments used and the structure of the study. The theoretical framework is based on different traditions such as moral development (Power, Higgins and Kohlberg, 1989), moral discourse (Oser, 1986), critical theory (Giroux, 1989) and the moral task of teachers (Gudmondsdottir, 1990; Sockett, 1992).

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Renewed interest in the pedagogical task of education

In recent years, education in values has been high on the political agenda in many countries (Oser, 1994; Edwards, Munn and Fogelman, 1993; Nucci, 1997). The education system is expected to contribute to the development of values and of citizenship. Social processes such as secularization, individualization, value differentiation and the increasing multiculturalism of society have modified the generally accepted consensus which used to mold thought and behavior. Parents and children, teachers and students can no longer just tread the accepted paths, but are now involved in joint processes of negotiation. Constant reflection on and discussion of educational aims and practices have become vital (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994).

In 1992 the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of that time, Minister Ritzen, advocated that attention should once more be given to the task of education in developing values and norms. The state does not set out in concrete terms which values and norms students should develop, but it does indicate certain directions in its education and cultural policies. Ritzen (1992) rightly pointed out that the schools themselves, acting on the basis of their denomination, should support further development of the values they consider important for their students. Education is constantly concerned with value development among students. Indeed, many authors see education as a fully value-linked activity (Giroux, 1989; Goodlad, Soder and Sirotnik, 1990; Sockett, 1992; Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1993; Strike and Ternasky, 1993; Oser, 1994). Teachers in all subjects constantly embody values in their behavior, in their selection of teaching material, in the personal focus which they provide on this material and in their reactions to students (Gudmondsdottir, 1990). This is not the same as value transfer, as students construct their own values, but teachers do attempt to influence this development of values. Veugelers (1995) describes the actions of teachers using the term 'stimulation of values'.

Greater autonomy for children, also in terms of value development

The fact that Minister Ritzen could point to insufficient attention for the pedagogical task did not mean that pedagogical activity had completely disappeared from educational practice. Rather, the pedagogical task had mostly disappeared from educational theory in the eighties, which included a disappearance from the discourse of teachers on their own educational practice. This was probably more a change in the theorizing than in teaching 'on the ground'. In the fifties the emphasis in values and norms was on conformity, while the sixties set off a trend to more attention for self-expression, social awareness and democratization. In the eighties education was dominated by a technical-instrumental approach which left little room for values.

The nineties are characterized on one hand by a further disintegration of the previously cohesive value systems, and on the other hand by greater independence in the development of personal value orientations. In a modern society, more and more people are gaining more freedom to make their own choices in the field of values (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994). This does not mean that old structures and institutions have fully lost their function, but the range of options has increased. Moreover, the trend to globalization has expanded the cultural spectrum of many people. Increased mobility is allowing people to gain greater experience of other cultures, both abroad and in their own country, and on both real and virtual form. The multicultural nature of our society is offering a greater range of experience, but also requires all participants to be able to deal with and accept other values. The context for value development by children is now more complicated, while they are simultaneously being required to show greater autonomy in all areas, including that of value development.

Ritzen used the term 'pedagogical task of education', whereby the pedagogical element is confined to a focus on values and norms. We propose the term 'value-forming education', which is in line with the international use of the term 'value education' (Halstead and Taylor, 1996). The addition of the word 'forming' emphasizes that values undergo development and that education can play an active role in this process. If we speak about the upbringing task regarding values we use the term 'moral development'.

Which values should education focus on?

Values are judgments based on an idea about what is good and bad; they refer to concepts of 'good life'. Values are not a question of personal preference based on taste; they are judgments based on more or less explicit and developed ideas about how someone personally relates to their environment. Values are expressed in subjective attitudes, but also in behavior. Values are affectively charged elements of cognition relating to behavior (also see Berkowitz, 1995; Oser, 1996). It is the combination of abstracted values and context-related values which makes thinking on values so complex. At an abstract level it is easy to reach agreement on the importance of values such as justice, while in practice very different understandings can emerge of what actually is just. Research often shows that agreement at an abstract level is often paired with a personal interpretation at the level of concrete actions by teachers.

Many education experts and above all politicians make short lists of values relevant to education. In Scotland a few central values are applied in the SCCS project: respect and care for yourself, respect and care for others, a feeling of belonging and social responsibility (Berkowitz, 1995). In the 'Just Community' approach, the central values are care, trust, collective responsibility and participation (Power, Higgins and Kohlberg, 1989). The Dutch Minister Ritzen (1992) cited the basic rights of the constitution and values which derive their validity from the importance of (public) health and the natural living environment. The 'long lists' consist of moral values such as justice and solidarity, and more regulative values such as regularity and structure in work and behavior, the development of self-discipline and independence, and learning to deal with criticism. Berkowitz (1997) describes these regulative values as meta-moral characteristics: they are personal qualities which support moral functioning but are not in themselves moral, for instance self-discipline and the ability to empathize.

Value lists show many similarities, but also often differ in the following dimensions:

- individual oriented - society oriented
- conformity - independence
- acceptance of values - learning to think critically about values.

Various different opinions about values and norms in education can be put forward. The Character education movement has a great influence, specially in the USA (Lickona, 1991; Wynne and Ryan, 1993; Huffman, 1994; Rusnak, 1998). Purpel (1997, p. 147) analyzes the 'character education movement' in the United States and concludes: "the emphasis is on the retention of the status quo, order, hard work, obedience, genderual restraint, stability and hierarchy.... It is a rhetoric of fear and uncertainty, of rapid moral and social decay, and it strives for the return to an ethic of common responsibility, sobriety, the postponement of reward, respect for authority and the duty to work". In the Dutch debate, such values are referred to as 'clammy' or 'soggy' values. But there are also 'fresh' values such as courage, trust and tolerance. The 'fresh' values are also cited in the Dutch debate on citizenship (Van Gunsteren, 1992).

Schools must prepare students for functioning in a democratic society, i.e. provide them with an moral development for citizenship (Giroux, 1989; Goodman, 1992; Noddings, 1992; Power and Power, 1992). Citizenship does not only refer to the public sphere, but also to the fields of work (Veugelers, 1995), care (Ten Dam and Volman, 1998), and international orientation (Karsten, 1997). Various types of citizenship are defined in the literature, including the calculating and the critical-democratic citizen. In the latter vision, citizens are not simply participants, but also take on responsibility for the functioning of the community. Critical-democratic citizens have an attitude whereby a critical attitude goes hand in hand with solidarity with others. A multicultural society makes further demands of this critical-democratic citizenship. Modern society in all its complexity requires young people to develop their own identity and at the same time to desire to actively participate in society. Ethical and moral values are important in the precise definition of 'good' citizenship, and moral values are concretized in citizen behavior. Such a focus on values means that in education the teacher stimulates the development of abstract values such as solidarity with others, but also that the student him/herself applies a critical attitude to arrive at his/her own concrete signification.

In many situations it is necessary for a person to think about what is right and what is wrong, which involves a considered weighing-up of issues based in part on values. Such consideration requires cognitive skills, together with communicative skills in order to discuss value issues with others. We select the term 'value communication' here because reflecting on or arguing about values can be seen as essential to, or at least an element of, this communication.

Skills are applied in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of values and in order to communicate about values. In the Kohlberg tradition values must be developed through discussion and collaboration. It is not enough to develop individual argumentation skills; students must also learn to think about and to discuss moral problems in a group (Power, Higgins and Kohlberg, 1989). This gives students a wider perspective which encourages them to see themselves as part of a broader democratic moral community (Duncan, 1997). Within the critical thinking movement there is also a lot of attention for skills regarding values. Paul (1992) and Ennis (1994) argues for a value-neutral position of teachers in it. McLaren (1994), Walters (1994) and Veugelers (1997; 1998) argue for a socio-cultural project.

Research shows that the active participation of students in learning processes is important. Students must actively come into contact with others, both inside and outside the school. 'Moral discourse' for instance is an interactive discussion model for problems of justice (Oser, 1986; 1994). The aim is that a child develops his/her own opinion and simultaneously considers the opinion of others. This view on learning processes is in line with insights provided by the discipline of constructivism within cognitive psychology; here too the emphasis in knowledge production is placed on an active approach by students and interaction with other students and the teacher. Knowledge production is here seen as a process of personal signification. When knowledge is strongly value related then personal assignment of meaning is an even more important factor. The acquisition of skills for consideration of values is necessary for the adoption of a critical distance to values, definition of one's own position and judgement of one's own behavior and the behavior of others. In education, and especially in secondary education, we are seeing increasing adoption of objectives aimed at the development of skills for arriving at one's own opinion.

The government, schools and individual teachers can devise their own socio-cultural

project in which they select the values they consider important for young people and determine the degree of autonomy for young people which they aim for.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What do parents, teachers and students in secondary education currently believe to be important values and skills in secondary education and how should moral development at home and at school be coordinated?
The following research questions were specified in the study:

1. What are important goals of moral development for students, parents and teachers?
2. What are the opinions of students, parents and teachers on the actual and desirable relationship between moral development tasks at home and at school?
3. What do students, parents and teachers think about the teachers' moral development task?
4. How do students, parents and teachers experience the schoolculture?
5. Which sticking points do students, parents and teachers experience with regard to:
    a. moral development practices at school?
    b. the (attunement of) moral development practices at home and at school?
6. Which new possibilities do students, parents and teachers see with regard to:
    a. moral development practices at schools,
    b. the (attunement) of moral development practices at home and at school?

With reference to all research questions it will be examined whether the opinions, perceptions, wishes and solutions for the identified sticking points show a correspondence with the background characteristics of the respondents (gender, ethnicity and social environment) and the characteristics of the participant schools (school type and denomination). In this article we concentrate on the questions 1, 2, 5 and 6: on goals, division of tasks and attunement (see also Veugelers and de Kat, 1998).

Research structure

The study modelled on the Delphi Method (Turoff, 1975) consisted of three phases: a survey by questionnaire, group interviews and panel discussions. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were supplemented by qualitative data from the group interviews and the panel discussions. An instrument was developed for each of the three Delphi phases. For the first phase, three analogue versions of a questionnaire were constructed. The only real difference between these three versions is in the formulation of the items or alternative answers, in the sense that they are adjusted to the perspective of the response group in question. In the student questionnaire the questions relating to the attunement of the pedagogical practice between home and school were not included. For the second Delphi phase (the group interviews) and the third Delphi phase (the panel discussions) a discussion protocol was drawn up on the basis of the results from the questionnaire survey. A similar research has been done in primary education by Klaassen en Leeferink (1998). Both research projects have been financed by the the Centre for Youth

Information in the Netherlands.

The goals of moral development

Which goals do students, parents and teachers consider important at home and at school? This section of the questionnaire consists of 28 themes considered important in moral development, based on earlier research as mentioned for example in the first part of the article. Formulation of the items for this section of the questionnaire was based on the following five aspects:

- Self-determination, or autonomy. This aspect concerns themes such as the development of self-confidence, responsibility, perseverance, independence and formation of one's opinion.
- Conformity, or discipline. This concerns themes such as obedience, order and regularity, adaption to current rules and good manners.
- Social awareness. This deals with themes like tolerance, solidarity, non-discrimination, respect for divergent opinions and concern for the welfare of others.
- Virtues. Themes in this section include honesty, justice and reliability.

A format developed by De Kat (1996) was used to answer the questions in this section of the questionnaire; the format was adapted in a number of points for this study. With reference to the various moral development goals, the students, parents and teachers were asked to indicate on a scale of five the following:

- how important they find these goals in the moral development of children,
- how much time and attention is devoted to these goals at home,
- whether they consider that the school should pay attention to these goals,
- how much attention is actually paid to these goals at school,
- how satisfied they are about the attention devoted to these goals at school.

Execution of the study

The questionnaire survey into the moral development task of the school and the attunement between parents and school in moral development was carried out in eight secondary schools. The schools were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- the interest of the school in the theme of the study,
- the denomination of the school (public, Protestant, Roman Catholic or private),
- the school type: HAVO/Higher General Secondary Education or VBO/Secondary Vocational Education (4 HAVO departments and 4 VBO departments).

The response of the students, parents and teachers to the questionnaires

The questionnaires were presented to students, their parents and their teachers. The questionnaires for the students were completed at school in the classical manner. Following completion the students were given an envelope with a questionnaire for their parents. The parents could return the completed questionnaire to the researchers by means of the enclosed reply envelope. The contact person at the school ensured distribution of the questionnaire among the teachers. The teachers too were requested to return the completed questionnaire in a reply envelope to the researchers. A total of 837 completed questionnaires were received: 571 student questionnaires, 180 parent questionnaires and 86 teacher questionnaires. The response by parents and teachers is slightly disappointing. A total of 32% of the parent questionnaires were returned

completed, while the response by teachers amounted to 34%. The response at HAVO schools was slightly higher among both parents and teachers than at the VBO schools. The response by parents of HAVO students was 39%, while the response by parents of VBO students was 26%. The response by HAVO teachers was 45%, which is considerably higher than the response by the VBO teachers, which is 25%.

Some characteristics of the respondents

55% of the students are girls and 44% boys. Most students were aged between 14 and 17. 14% of the students indicated that their original nationality is not Dutch, these figures are close to the national average. Most students (60%) indicate that they do not view themselves as belonging to a church or religious group (15% indicate that they are Protestant, 15% Roman Catholic). Of the 180 questionnaires completed by *parents*, 61% was completed by mothers of the students and 37% by the fathers. Virtually all parents have the Dutch nationality (93%). The response contains an over-representation of parents with "higher" education, a familiar phenomenon in surveys which utilize written questionnaires. The parents of VBO students often have a lower education level than the parents of HAVO students. For further analysis, this factor social class was divided into three levels: low, middle and high. The percentage of parents that indicated they do not belong to a church or religious group is considerably lower than among the students, namely 37%. A corresponding percentage of parents (37%) is Roman Catholic, 20% is Protestant.

The 86 *teachers* who completed the questionnaire comprise 63% men and 37% women. If we compare this with the national figures for secondary education then female teachers are slightly over-represented. The average age of the teachers is 43. The average teaching experience amounts to 16 years. With one exception all the questionnaires were completed by teachers who are of Dutch origin. The percentages of the teachers with religion are close to those of the parents: 41% state they do not belong to a church or religious group, 27% is Roman Catholic, 22% is Protestant.

Group interviews and panel discussions

Group interviews with students, parents and teachers took place at the participant schools. The aim of the interviews was to obtain wider and deeper perspectives on the results of the questionnaire survey. The interviews were organized around the subjects dealt with in the questionnaire. A total of 53 students took part in the 8 student group interviews, 31 teachers in the 7 teacher group interviews and 22 parents in the 5 parent group interviews. At 3 schools it was not possible to arrange a group interview with parents. Three schools were selected for the third phase, a panel discussion.

SCALE CONSTRUCTION

The goals of moral development

Factor analysis on the answers of all respondents revealed four factors. One goal of moral development, religious education, does not fit into the factor structure. Table 1 presents the matrices with factor loadings and communalities following varimax rotation. The four factors explain a total of 43% of the variance.

Tabel.1 Factormatrix "moral development goals"

	f1	f2	f3	f4	c
Strategic action in the moral domain					
independence	.65				.49
perseverance	.64				.53
forming one's own judgement	.57				.41
forming one's own opinion	.52				.42
learning to think critically	.48				.34
development of self-discipline	.47				.39
being able to perform	.47				.38
underpinning a divergent opinion	.46				.32
learning to deal with criticism	.45				.35
social sensitivity					
taking other people into consideration		.65			.58
being open to other opinions		.57			.55
helpfulness		.57			.53
respect for other ways of thinking		.53			.45
involvement in the welfare of others		.48			.38
non-discrimination of others		.45			.35
tolerance		.44			.46
developing the ability to adapt		.44			.38
solidarity with others		.40			.39
reliability		.38			.40
honesty		.37			.34
conformity					
obedience, listening to adults			.65		.56
good manners			.62		.49
regularity and structure in work and behavior			.42		.42
emotional development					.47
development of self-confidence				.63	.47
justice				.57	.40
dealing with feelings and emotions				.42	.34
ability to bear responsibility				.33	
percentage explained variation	33.4	4.1	3.1	2.5	

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The first factor, *strategic action in the moral domain*, refers to the formulation of one's own opinion, being able to underpin this opinion (even if it is a divergent opinion), being able to deal with criticism, but also showing perseverance and self-discipline. This factor involves an active, careful, well-considered method of thinking and acting with respect to values and norms. The items of the second factor, *social sensitivity*, refer to involvement with and showing consideration for others, tolerance, non-discrimination of others and openness to other opinions. This factor reflects a clear social orientation. Factor three, *conformity*, relates to obedience, listening to adults, regularity and structure in work and behavior, good manners and performance-orientation. In other words, adjustment to rules and norms. The fourth factor, *emotional development*, relates to the development of self-confidence, dealing with feelings and emotions, being just and bearing responsibility. In other words, regulating and controlling personal feelings.

On the basis of the identified factor solution it was possible to construct four scales: *strategic action in the moral domain* (n items = 9, cronbach's alpha = .83); *social sensitivity* (n items = 11, cronbach's alpha = .88); *conformity* (n items = 3, cronbach's alpha = .72); *emotional development* (n items = 4, cronbach's alpha = .71). The internal consistency of these scales is sufficient to allow statements about groups of respondents. We will only describe results that show a statisticly significant difference.

RESULTS

Goals of moral development

Parents, teachers and students attach great importance to the moral development goals of strategic action in the moral domain, conformity, social sensitivity and emotional development. Parents and teachers score even higher than students in this respect. Students, parents and teachers consider conformity to be slightly less important than strategic action in the moral domain, social sensitivity and personality development. The providers of moral development - parents and teachers - do not differ from each other in what they consider to be important goals of moral development.

Kohn (1969) differentiates two fundamental, mutually exclusive value orientations: self-determination and conformity. In our study within secondary education the principle of self-determination is divided into three factors which do however show a strong cohesion: strategic action, social sensitivity and emotional development. Strategic action in the moral domain is more cognitive and goal-oriented, social sensitivity involves the interaction dimension and emotional development involves the more psychological dimension. Students, parents and teachers agree in the great importance they attach to these moral development goals. With the exception of the gender of the students, the differentiated school and individual characteristics do not influence the importance attached within the groups of students, parents and teachers to the moral development goals of strategic action, social sensitivity and emotional development.

Girls attach more importance to the moral development goals of strategic action, social sensitivity and emotional development than boys do. It would seem that girls view the socio-cultural aspects of moral development as more important than boys do. When it comes to parents, gender is not a significant factor in the importance attached to moral development goals, nor do

parents differentiate in the choice of moral development goals for girls and boys. Teachers do not show any gender-determined variation in these respects either. Gender is however an influence on the moral development goals wished by students, due to their socialization. Gender is no longer a factor when men and women - at least at the level of abstract moral development goals - engage in moral development as parents or teachers.

In contrast, there is less agreement as to the importance of the moral development goal of conformity. To begin with, all groups consider conformity to be slightly less important than the other moral development goals. There are also differences between school types with regard to this factor: the VBO students and their parents attach more importance to moral development goals in the area of conformity than do HAVO students and their parents. This school type-related difference is not reflected in the teachers. Are there also differences within the school types? The students see no difference, but the parents of students at the Private HAVO attach less importance to conformity than do the parents of students at the Protestant and Roman Catholic HAVO. There are cultural differences between students and parents at VBO and HAVO which are expressed in the importance attached to conformity. The conformity culture for parents can also differ between schools of the same type.

Students from a social class where the parents have a medium-level education attach significantly more importance to conformity than students with a high education level and also more than students from a social class with a lower education level. We see the same pattern among the parents. Adjustment to social norms seems to be most strongly rooted in the mid-level social class; parents with a higher or lower level of education attach less importance to conformity. Students of non-Dutch origin do not differ from students of Dutch origin with regard to strategic action, social sensitivity and emotional development, but they do differ when it comes to conformity. Students of non-Dutch origin attach more importance to conformity than students of Dutch origin.

In the group interviews the students, parents and teachers indicated what they think these moral development goals actually mean. If we compare the interpretations of students, parents and teachers we see many correspondences and also differences of emphasis. Students put the emphasis on formulating their own opinion, parents on the relationship between strategic action and conformity and teachers on openness to criticism. Teachers put strategic action in a pedagogical perspective by combining it with emotional development. Parents are more concerned with what they see as the necessary socializing nature of strategic action in the moral domain. Students see strategic action as an emancipatory instrument. For some students this is more a question of personal emancipation, for others it has more to do with social emancipation.

Students regard conformity as a necessary evil and believe that conformity should be a two-way traffic between students and teachers. Students see themselves as young adults who should be listened too. Parents and teachers regard conformity as a necessary condition for communicating with each other and for co-existence. Parents are the strongest advocates of conformity; for them conformity is a core element of moral development. Teachers have more problems than parents do with the disciplinary and inhibiting nature of conformity and thus sometimes also advocate resistance to conformity. Teachers and parents look for a positive manifestation of conformity, while for students such a perspective is mostly still not accessible.

Students, parents and teachers attach major importance to the development of social sensitivity, and provide functional, social and ethical motives for this attitude. Some students say

that social sensitivity can have its limitations, and that you have to look after yourself too. Parents often establish a link between social sensitivity, strategic action and emotional development. Teachers regard the development of social sensitivity as necessary for participation in education, but also in other social contexts. Teachers do sometimes perceive social involvement between students, but not between students and teachers.

Students see emotional development as self-regulation of feelings and as a precondition for the other goals. This factor ensures that you can hold your own at school and in society, look after yourself and can go your own way. Emotional development facilitates social behavior. The self-regulation of feelings develops over the years and, according to parents, this emotional development is also important for determining one's own position with respect to others. Like students and parents, teachers see emotional development as a precondition for other goals. Teachers want to give students self-confidence and help them to deal with feelings.

Division of tasks between parents and school

How does moral development by parents relate to moral development at school? Does the school have a task here and what do the various groups believe this task to be? All those involved in the study believe that both moral development-providing environments, home and school, have a role to play in the studied moral development goals. Moreover, students, parents and teachers agree that the task of the parents in all four categories is greater than that of the school. But students, parents and teachers also attribute such a high responsibility to the school that secondary education cannot be said to have just a supplementary task in the moral development of young people. The education sector still has a pedagogical task for this age group too. This pedagogical task, allotted to schools by the state, is accepted and supported by parents. Teachers recognize this pedagogical task as an essential aspect of their professionalism. Students accept and support this pedagogical care for their moral development provided by teachers. The fact that all those involved attribute both moral development environments with such an important role in the moral development of children makes it all the more necessary to coordinate the activities of both areas. Students, parents and teachers do not have significantly different opinions on the task allocation for the defined moral development goals; parents and teachers have a role to play in all four categories of moral development goals.

Are there any criticisms directed by one group of upbringers at the other group of upbringers? Parents, or at least the parents who took part in this study, do not 'accuse' the teachers - not even regarding the issue of conformity, which often elicits disparate reactions. Teachers do put forward some criticism of parents. It is notable that teachers do not believe that parents should devote more time to developing conformity. According to teachers, parents should pay more attention to the more cognitive and affective aspects of moral development: the development of strategic action, emotional development and social sensitivity, and less to the disciplinary dimension of moral development.

According to students, parents and teachers a fair amount of attention is already being devoted to these moral development goals at school, but still less than all groups would like to see. Students, parents and teachers all want more attention to be paid to these moral development goals. Parents also had the chance to indicate how much attention they think teachers are actually giving to these moral development goals. Many parents (35%) indicated that they do not know how much attention teachers give to this area. Many parents obviously know little of the moral development-related activities of the school.

Students, who are directly involved in education, estimate the attention devoted to these moral development goals as significantly lower than the teachers themselves. According to the students only some attention is given to these goals; students estimate different amounts of attention for different goals. The goals which are probably more perceptible for the students and more classically 'school-like', i.e. strategic action (typically 'academic' cognitive goals) and conformity (requirements made of the students' behavior) are believed by students to receive more attention than the more social-psychologic goals of social sensitivity and emotional development.

Teachers already devote a fair amount of attention at school to these moral development goals, but according to students, parents and teachers this could increase even more. Students have no objections to teachers devoting more attention to these moral development goals. Parents attribute an even greater role to the school than the teachers are currently carrying out. Teachers too believe it would be better if they could devote more time to these moral development goals. VBO students want more attention devoted to conformity than HAVO students do; HAVO students in contrast want more attention for strategic action in the moral domain. Correspondingly, the parents of VBO students believe that more attention should be devoted at school to conformity than do the parents of HAVO students. The teachers at VBO and HAVO schools are much less disparate in their opinions than the students and the parents.

The group interviews gave further insights into the concrete division of tasks between parents and school. According to students, parents and teachers the school primarily has a task in the development of strategic action and social sensitivity. The school has the greatest range of possibilities in this area. In the development of strategic action the acquisition of skills focuses on forming an opinion and being able to reflect on one's own actions. Such skills are already often practiced, but according to students, parents and teachers even more attention should be devoted to this.

The development of social sensitivity is regarded as an important task of education since children in education come into contact with many other children, and in particular also children from other social classes and cultures. In the field of conformity the school chiefly has a task when it comes to school rules, but also in preparing for future participation in society. Students, parents and teachers all believe that emotional development is chiefly a task for parents, although teachers can further assist students in the development of aspects such as self-confidence. Although the focal point of moral development is believed by all parties to be in the family, the school also has an important pedagogical task; this is especially relevant in the development of strategic action and social sensitivity.

DISCUSSION: MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE TASK OF EDUCATION

More attention in education for strategic action in the moral domain

The study shows that students, parents and teachers all want to devote more attention to the development of strategic action in the moral domain. How can the emphasis on strategic action in secondary education be increased? Two debates are currently dominant in thinking on renewal of the Dutch education system: learning to learn (self-regulated learning or independent learning) and the pedagogical task. These debates are taking place separately from each other at all levels of education. Unjustly, self-regulated learning is often seen as modern, flexible and forward-looking

while the pedagogical task is seen as conservative, inflexible and simply as a tool for desired social functioning. The separation of these issues is one of the factors why the pedagogical task is currently limited to the regulation of student behavior in the first place instead of also focusing on learning to learn about values and value development, i.e. the development of a reflective ability in the normative field (Valstar and Veugelers, 1998).

It is precisely in the development of learning skills in the area of values and norms that it is possible to make a link between learning to learn and the pedagogical task of education. This elevates the pedagogical task above the simple transfer of values and norms. If the division between self-regulated learning and the pedagogical task is maintained, then education develops a type of citizenship which is embodies by a communal, conformist type of citizen instead of a critical-democratic citizen. This implies that pedagogical and educational thinking about strategic action by students tends to emphasize the promotion of students' reflective skills regarding values and value development, whereby the education system formulates this approach and communicates with parents about it. In this way teachers can serve as examples for students, and for parents too. This can increase the possibility of developing critical-democratic citizens. Strategic action in the moral domain builds on many skills which can be taught at school.

More attention for development of social sensitivity

All those involved also believe that social sensitivity should be given more attention at school. In principle, school gives students a chance to become acquainted with students from other social environments and cultures. But does school really provide this opportunity? The Dutch government policy, influenced both by equal opportunities and a good education and career process, aims at creating broad school communities and a good flow between the various types of schools, especially in the first phase of secondary education. There are indications however that in practice things are developing in the other direction: that parents and students prefer a small, clearly ordered school and the smallest possible school community. In particular students who are going on to higher education and their parents make a categorical choice in this respect.

In response to this, students in the broader school communities are now also being placed earlier in separate streams, and smaller pedagogical units are being formed within the large schools. If this trend to segregation continues, then it will inhibit the envisaged postponement of study choice in the first part of secondary education. The implication for the students' identity development is that their field of socio-cultural experience will be reduced ever further, being confined to students with a similar cultural background. Our study reveals many similarities between VBO and HAVO regarding the importance attached to moral development goals and moral development practices. There are also differences however, especially regarding conformity and strategic action; in this way the moral development of VBO students differs from that of HAVO students. The state also allocates a major task to the school regarding the promotion of social cohesion and the preparation of students for a multicultural society. The tendency to segregation in education practice has exactly the opposite effect. Groups of students with different cultural backgrounds and ethnicity are separated instead of being brought together. Consequently, the identity development of students within the school takes place primarily within their own cultural group.

A second observation on the possibilities of developing social sensitivity relates to changes in the pedagogic-didactic approach in education. Secondary education is placing more emphasis on the

student's individual learning career and is replacing classical moments with study hours. This means that the student is addressed more as an individual than as a member of a group. In traditional education, of course, the group is primarily regarded as a consequence of the school organization and not as a pedagogical unit with possibilities for initiating and supporting group processes on the basis of moral development goals. A number of schools, especially schools which already devote much attention to social goals in their educational concept, are already reacting to the tendency to individualization by searching for possibilities to have the students function more in smaller groups. This can be achieved, for instance, by emphasizing collaborative learning, joint study projects and mentoring in smaller groups (Veugelers and Zijlstra, 1998). With respect to the development of identity, the student in traditional classical education is addressed as a relatively anonymous member of a large group, while in individualized education he/she is someone who bears personal responsibility but functions relatively independently from other students, and functions in group education as a participant in a shared learning process. Teachers in particular advocate such a use of the group. As regards group learning it is necessary to demonstrate, also to parents, the learning effect of this approach on cognitive skills and on the level of social action. After all, learning is a social process of signification (Tappan, 1998). The school as a community with a wide cultural diversity of students provides opportunities for the development of social sensitivity.

More emotional development at school?

According to the students, their parents and teachers, emotional development by the parents fulfills a much more important role in this area than the school does. Nevertheless the school should also devote attention to this aspect. The personal functioning of the student is much less obvious in secondary education than in primary education, and thus harder to deal with as it is not one teacher, but at least ten who teach the student each week. Many schools now have a system of student supervision or mentoring with one or more special lesson hours, but it is clear that compiling all the relevant information and coordinating pedagogical action by teachers and the guidance counselor are processes difficult to organize in the schools. In view of the pedagogical task of the school, this is a precondition for being able to support students as a team. It is also an essential factor for communication with parents. Mentoring should thus be strengthened and supervision focused on students' emotional development should be incorporated in the total supervision strategy of the school.

Conformity and active participation

The agreement between the respondents on strategic action in the moral domain, social sensitivity and emotional development is greater than that with regard to conformity. There are various opinions about conformity and it seems to shift in meaning. In particular the qualitative data indicate that conformity is not in itself seen as such an important value, but as a condition for being able to realize other moral development goals. Conformity is seen as a precondition for participation in education, the home and society; conformity must, so to speak, facilitate the realization of 'higher' moral development goals. Students in particular attach less importance to conformity. It is therefore recommended that students be involved more in the formulation of rules in the school. Currently the schools, but also homes, apply a 'management by negotiation' for the secondary school age group. According above all to teachers this negotiatory management is an ongoing process: the conformity needs to be re-established time and time again. The study also

provides indications, however, that when students are more involved in the establishment of rules, the acceptance of these rules is increased and negotiation on these becomes less of a permanent activity. Such education practice not only benefits the pedagogical climate at school, but can also function as an example for parents. Increasing the active participation of students in school can help teachers and students to jointly develop conformity.

Students as a third party in the attunement process

In secondary education the students play an increasingly prominent role. They present their own verdict and choices regarding their own development and the contribution made to this by their educators, and they wish these views to be taken seriously by parents and teachers. More and more, they state their own opinions on moral development situations at home and at school and they formulate the practices they would wish to be applied at home and at school. Students increasingly take on a middle position between teachers and parents. If parents and teachers are to communicate, then students believe they should play a mediating role, and preferably control the process themselves. We talked to students from the third and fourth grades. It is just at this age (15 and 16 years old) that the independent position of students in the communication between parents and teachers becomes fully developed.

The mediating role of the student has a filtering effect. Not only are students, parents and teachers well aware that students, in contrast to teachers, will chiefly pass on positive reports to their parents; also when passing on letters to parents, students sometimes play a selective role. Students continually try to control the information and accompanying conclusions which pass between parents and teachers. This new role provides students with interesting challenges and is sure to stimulate further development of their strategic action abilities. But seen from the perspective of attunement between parents and school, this would lead to parents and teachers increasingly losing the initiative. If the student develops positively then this means a successful phase in the student's moral development; the student takes important steps towards adulthood. If the development progresses less favorably, however, then the safety net of good contacts between school and parents is a necessary condition.

In the first years of secondary education this contact must be well established. This is so that when students in the higher grades start to participate in the attunement of moral development at home and at school, parents and teachers already have a tradition of communication about moral development at school. In the event of less favorable development by the student, the two moral upbringers can support each other. Taking the students seriously as a third party implies that students should be able to participate more actively in their own education from the first year at secondary school onwards.

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